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The Institute for the Study of the USSR is a free corporation of scholars who have left the Soviet Union. Its purpose is to make available to the Free World analyses of contemporary events and detailed studies of various aspects of the Soviet system by persons who know the system intimately. Opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect views or policies of the Institute.

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THE KREMLIN'S INTEREST IN WORLD YOUTH

The Kremlin is casting the net for the youth of other countries. The principal snares in the Soviet drive to capture the world youth opinion are the newly opened University for the Friendship of the Peoples, a scheduled World Youth Forum, and summer courses at selected localities of the Soviet Union.

The Soviet youth campaign is intensified by the Communist Chinese competition in this area.

It is the apparent hope of the Soviet leaders that the Friendship University will become a nidus of infection with what Khrushchev called "'the disease of the time,' Communism. "

The World Youth Forum is to be held next July. Statements made by the delegates to its founding session dovetailed with the main elements of the Soviet foreign policy, indicating that the forum will serve as still another Soviet propaganda platform.

That the forum is being organized not, as was usual, by the World Federation of Democratic Youth but by the Soviet leaders themselves is an indication of a cooling relationship. The federation, for 14 years enthralled by the Kremlin, now favors Peking. The political re-orientation of the federation is explained by the Kremlin's increasing reliance on the International Student Union, a faithful helper to the Soviets in their designs on world youth.

The summer courses, conducted by Soviet propagandists near the Black Sea last year, were designed to sway Western students who do not sympathize with Communist ideas. Last year's participants included students from Oxford University.

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No. 14, 1960/61

THE KREMLIN'S INTEREST IN WORLD YOUTH

The Kremlin has embarked on a campaign to gain the support of the youth of other countries for its policies. The principal measures undertaken in the framework of this campaign are the foundation of the University for the Friendship of the Peoples, the scheduling of a world youth forum in Moscow, and annual summer courses at selected localities in the Soviet Union. The present campaign is spurred by the competition between Peking and the Kremlin to win over youth in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

The University for the Friendship of the Peoples was opened on November 17, 1960, celebrated by the Soviet and pro-Communist student organizations throughout the world as the International Student Day. According to Khrushchev, the aim of the university is to train the young intelligentsia from the Asian, African, and Latin American countries. It is not difficult, however, to unravel the thinking behind the creation of this new educational institution: The Party Central Committee hopes that cadres trained in the USSR will be pro-Soviet in outlook and will work along lines favorable to the world Communist movement when they return home. This aim was stressed by Khrushchev as he addressed himself to the students during the inaugural ceremony:

If anyone of you wishes to discover the reasons, to find out why people are infected with Communism, then please do your best. I think that the president of the university and the professors will help you as much as possible. . . . but I want to warn you that there is usually no guarantee that learned experimenters who study a particular disease will not be infected themselves with it (Pravda, November 18, 1960).

The principles of student selection were such as to admit those persons to the university who were most likely to be sympathetic toward Soviet policy:

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"Preference will be given to natives of countries particularly in need of our aid, to persons from poor families, the families of workers, laborers, and the unemployed." (Yunost, Youth, No. 11, 1960). Thus, in order to study at the university one must have a "proletarian background" and "proletarian consciousness." Selection is also dependent on the amount of aid a country requires from the USSR, which is proportional to the Kremlin's interest in that country. One result of the application of this principle was that some countries, notably Burma, Ethiopia, and Nepal--refused to allow the candidates selected by Moscow to attend the university (Pravda, November 17, 1960). Also Soviet students are to study at the school. "What sort of friendship of peoples would this be if only foreigners were to study at the University for the Friendship of the Peoples? Soviet people... will help their comrades from abroad to study better," Khrushchev explained in Pravda on November 18, 1960. Presumably the Soviets will pick the most reliable students from the Party standpoint for this function. In the first year foreign students will study Russian, while the Soviet students will study English, French and Spanish. Originally the Soviet leaders considered inviting foreign specialists to teach at the university; however, this idea was rejected in favor of an all-Soviet teaching staff. The students will thus be isolated from the outside world.

The World Youth Forum, to be held in July, 1961, is not being organized by the World Federation of Democratic Youth, which is usually responsible for all pro-Communist international youth meetings, but by the Soviet leaders themselves, ostensibly at the behest of the Soviet youth. A preparatory committee met in February, 1960, to lay the groundwork for the forum.

The committee claimed to be "representing all groups of Soviet youth and completely reflecting its aspirations." The committee favored "discussing at the forum such questions as the problems of war and peace, the national independence of peoples, the satisfaction of social and economic rights of youth" (Molodezh Mira, World Youth, No. 5, 1960).

The founding session of the International Committee for the Support of the Forum, which was held in Moscow from September 15 to 17, was attended by representatives from more than a hundred youth, student, trade-union, and children's organizations from 60 countries. P. N. Reshetov, head of the Soviet delegation, made the main suggestions for the organization of the forum. The delegates who spoke after him did not discuss the Soviet proposals; they merely ratified them. The forthcoming forum is to be political in character. Its theme, as formulated at the founding session, is to be "Youth in the Mid-twentieth Century and its Problems." The statements made by the various delegates

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dovetailed with the main elements of Soviet foreign policy--"the abolition of military bases on foreign territory in the struggle against colonialism" and "peace throughout the world." A delegate from Honduras remarked, for example: "I am sure that the present of Cuba is our future--the future of the whole of Latin America, which the United States is still plundering with impunity" (Komsomolskaya Pravda, September 18, 1960).

The Soviets have no intention of permitting anti-Communist youth organizations to participate in the forum: "Excluded are organizations, and persons representing the standpoint of Fascism or applying its methods, representing racial and national discrimination, genocide and so on" (Komsomolskaya Pravda, September 18, 1960). A fascist label can obviously be applied to any youth organization of which the Soviets disapprove.

A faithful helper in the Kremlin's designs on the world youth is the International Student Union (I.S.U.), a pro-Communist youth organization founded in August 1946 at Stalin's command. The Sixth I.S.U. Congress, which took place in Bagdad in October, 1960, and which was attended by representatives of student organizations from 76 countries, was openly directed by the Soviets through the chairman of the student council of the Committee of Soviet Youth Organizations, V. Strizhko. The Congress resolutions and decisions all supported Soviet foreign policy. Komsomolskaya Pravda reported:

The representatives of the student organizations who met in Bagdad highly praised the humane measures of the Soviet government.... The Congress unanimously supported the new proposals of the Soviet government submitted at the fifteenth session of the U.N. General Assembly.... In the resolution on questions of peace, the Congress called upon all student organizations to play an active part in the movement of peoples for peace, for disarmament, against the imperialist adventures, for the abolition of military bases on foreign territory, for the cessation of atomic and nuclear weapon tests.... The Congress unanimously approved various resolutions supporting the heroic struggle of the students of Latin America (November 17, 1960).

The Congress endorsed the World Youth Forum and called upon all student organizations to participate in it. The I.S.U. Executive Committee has proposed an increase for 1961-62 in grants to the national student organizations of the colonial and newly developing countries and also in the scholarship fund available for students from these countries. It is obvious that this increase will be mainly achieved with Soviet aid and used for other than cultural aims. The congress has planned various high-sounding international measures aimed at gaining the sympathy of students throughout the world. They include international student conferences on disarmament and on "the struggle against colonialism and neo-colonialism," an international student seminar

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entitled "National Culture and National Education," the first Latin-American student seminar on economic and sociological problems, and various winter and summer courses.

The Soviets themselves have now started annual summer courses. The first were held in 1960 at Gurzuf on the Black Sea and were attended by 108 foreign students from 43 countries. Soviet reports reveal that these courses are designed to sway Western students who do not sympathize with Communist ideas. Participants in the courses included young Communists from Greece, North Korea and Japan, students from Oxford University and from the University of California, and the chairman of the Munich General Student Council (Smena, New Generation, No. 16, 1960). During the courses the proposal was made to organize a committee at Oxford University for the enrollment of students willing to work on virgin lands in the summer of 1961. The Soviet press took up the idea as follows: "Why shouldn't the gentlemen from Oxford have a try? The virgin lands are a broad concept. It has to be raised everywhere: both in Kazakhstan and in Oxford" (Smena, New Generation, No. 16, 1960).

The Bagdad Congress led off a campaign for the unity of the world student movement. This campaign not only implies a struggle against anti-Communist student organizations, but also refers to the rivalry between the Kremlin and Peking to win over youth in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The World Federation of Democratic Youth, which for 14 years was a tool of the Kremlin, now favors Peking. The session of the federation's Executive Committee, which took place in Conakry, Guinea, in March, 1960, mentioned the USSR only once in its many resolutions, and then, merely as a participant in the world forum. The session founded a new youth organization, the International Sports Committee of Youth, which was ignored by the Soviet press. The same silence greeted the Youth Day of Struggle against Colonialism on April 24, another federation project.

The political re-orientation of the World Federation of Democratic Youth is explained by the Kremlin's present reliance on the International Student Union in questions concerning youth. The Soviet leaders have also undertaken an independent step--the convening of the World Youth Forum. The federation has been invited merely as a routine participant. However, in spite of its loss of influence with the federation, the Kremlin did succeed in having the Eighth World Youth Festival postponed to avoid scheduling conflict with the forum. Nor is the festival to be held in Peking, as was suggested after the Seventh Festival in Vienna.

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